



# Integrated Country Strategy

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**Republic of Malta**

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

Approved: April 26, 2022

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Our bilateral relationship is strong, with excellent access and exchange of ideas. Embassy Malta is ideally placed to anchor U.S. interagency efforts to enhance American influence and advantage in the highly competitive Central Mediterranean. Our engagement is balanced between regional and bilateral issues, particularly related to rule of law, financial sector reform, and energy security, with a focus on transnational crime and security. We work to reinforce Europe's Southern Flank by developing Malta as an emerging and capable strategic partner. Embassy Valletta is focused on supporting Maltese efforts to enhance democracy, combat climate change, and fight corruption, while mitigating the impact of Great Powers seeking to advance their influence in the region. This competition exists in both hard and soft power, as aggressive commercial ventures and diplomatic overtures by the People's Republic of China feature prominently in Malta's foreign policy arena. Similarly, Russia and China have come to the arena with large-scale cultural performances that position these missions as some of the most active diplomatic sponsors on the local cultural scene.

The current government, which came to power in January 2020, holds a strong political mandate as they enter elections in mid-2022 and continue to build on promises of an anti-corruption focus and post-COVID-19 economic recovery. This makes the 2022-2024 time frame a clear window to make gains in our bilateral relationship in priority areas, including anti-corruption, rule of law, and energy security. Malta's dynamic economy, poised to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, makes it ripe for recruiting Maltese investment in the U.S., and the island's strategic location and business incentives make it an attractive option for many U.S. businesses seeking a gateway into EU and Middle Eastern markets. Despite the strong economic tailwinds of resurgent consumer confidence, pent up demand, low unemployment, and one of the highest COVID-19 vaccination rates in the world, significant risk factors remain. Most significantly, the June 2021 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) greylisting of Malta, endemic corruption, labor shortages, and emerging COVID-19 variants threaten Malta's long-term economic potential. Continued rule of law and financial sector reforms are needed to

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safeguard the stability of the Maltese economy and reputation as an attractive place to do business.

In addition to our overarching focus on serving and **protecting American Citizens abroad**, we operationalize the elements of overarching national and regional strategies through a simple “SIE” acronym: **security, innovation and commercial diplomacy**, and **empowerment**.

Institutional **security** is a prime focus of our efforts in Malta as we work to counter corruption, build judicial capacity, and ensure the integrity of the global financial system. Malta’s government took office in January 2020 following two months of political turmoil related to corruption revelations and resignations – including the former prime minister – resulting from the investigation into the October 2017 assassination of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. The government’s mandate to clean house offers immediate opportunities for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs anti-corruption programs in conjunction with the newly arrived Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor (RLA) to support reforms to Malta’s notoriously slow judicial system. In the wake of the 2021 greylisting by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), we will increase our anti-money laundering and financial oversight engagement to enable Malta to meet the FATF reform goals and improve its international business reputation and our cooperative relationship. Similarly, we will work with the Maltese to reinforce our influence that counters the narrative of malign actors and supports our shared goals of reinforcing democratic institutions, combatting climate change, and promoting global and regional stability and security.

Aiming to preserve peace through security, we continue to build upon our strong array of cooperative security partnerships. Today, Malta finds itself at a crossroads between Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, with strong strategic security interests in migration, Libya, and trans-Mediterranean issues. Our interagency Law Enforcement Working Group (LEWG) – which now includes representatives from the Departments of State, Treasury, Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security, as well as the FBI, Secret Service, and DEA – is our primary vehicle for coordinated interagency engagement on a host of transnational crime issues. The active and collaborative LEWG bolsters our Maltese partners’ efforts at interagency coordination,

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recognizing the small but critical capabilities held by Malta's various security services. Our cooperation and assistance covers the full spectrum of intelligence, investigation, interdiction, and prosecution to ensure that Malta has all of the tools necessary to tackle these challenges effectively. Despite the challenges of COVID, we continue to build our military cooperation relationship, including through Coast Guard and Navy ship visits and the creation and training of a Maltese Special Operations capability interoperable with NATO Partnership for Peace partners and U.S. regional security interests through Department of Defense 333 funding.

The Central Mediterranean is a highly competitive strategic environment containing many threats to U.S. interests. Our strategy to renew America's competitive advantages uses all of the instruments at our disposal, including a vigorous focus on **innovation and commercial diplomacy**. Though the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted Malta's economy, with the tourism sector especially hard hit, the island is well-positioned to resume its prior robust economic growth. The European Commission's summer 2021 economic forecast predicts 5.6 percent GDP growth in 2021 and 5.8 percent GDP growth in 2022. With unemployment rates consistently among the lowest in the EU even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Malta's robust economic growth is complemented by nearly full employment. The country's economic growth has been supported by the growth of its financial services, online gaming, and tourism sectors – three of Malta's fastest growing sectors that collectively contribute roughly half of GDP. At the same time, continued growth is limited by a number of factors, including FATF greylisting, insufficient energy sources, a growing labor shortage, infrastructure challenges, physical space limitations, and excessive and risk-averse banking procedures. As Malta's energy needs are underserved, the government seeks to both grow Malta's energy resource and production capacity and diversify its energy sector with an emphasis on renewables. American ideas and companies offering advanced technical solutions and innovations can address many of these challenges. We have made our Embassy a showcase for some of these technologies, including renewable energy, electric vehicles, and smart meters. We will also continue to push the government to ensure that Malta remains fully open to American businesses and work to bring Maltese investment to the U.S., all with the

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goal of expanding international markets for American products and creating more jobs back home.

We continue to support human rights in Malta and the **empowerment** of vulnerable populations, where appropriate, with recent efforts focused on migration, trafficking in persons (TIP), and women's rights. Despite its liberal and progressive European identity, Malta retains an insular character and likely will remain socially conservative by European standards. The Roman Catholic Church retains an extremely important position within Maltese society, and religion is a big part of public life. Even so, over the last 5-7 years, a staunchly Catholic Malta implemented a number of new laws governing social and sexual rights, earning the country substantial praise for its human rights progress. However, the island's recent liberalization on LGBT issues is not mirrored in all areas. Migrant arrivals in 2019 and 2020 overwhelmed Malta's limited capacity to manage and integrate migrants, and TIP remains a concern. We are committed to working with the Maltese to help coordinate policies and procedures on border security, TIP, and management of growing cultural diversity. With female labor participation and gender pay inequality among the worst in Europe, even as the university system now graduates more women than men, we have focused on increasing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) outreach for girls and highlighting U.S. higher education opportunities. Since the October 2017 Daphne Caruana Galizia murder, we emphasize the important balance between press freedom and responsible media, with a long-term focus on improving local investigative journalism and the role of media in effective democracy.

We recognize the need to provide a safe, accountable, and respectful work environment. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is a mission priority, not only in our hiring and management practices, but also through the promotion of an open and honest dialogue among all employees focused on ensuring all voices are heard and valued. These efforts begin inside the embassy and extend outside the walls and into all our program efforts with the local community and government. We will continue to maintain our aggressive approach to security and crisis preparedness to effectively manage our risks and avoid complacency. At the same time, we take a proactive approach to occupational safety and health. We prioritize cost

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savings and have supported regionalization efforts to more efficiently utilize the resources entrusted to us, including our IT systems. We are a member of the League of Green Embassies and we won the State Department's Greening Diplomacy Initiative award in 2018 and again in 2021 for cost containment in energy and transportation. Mission leadership prioritizes employee health, safety, morale, and welfare, and has a zero-tolerance policy on harassment. Customer service is a high priority across the Embassy, and we partner periodically with some of the best American brands in the private sector to import their best practices.

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## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** A Western-aligned Malta fully engaged in countering corruption, improving rule of law, addressing global challenges, and contributing to regional security.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Strengthen Malta's rule of law through supporting the development and reform of laws and legal systems.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Deter adversarial influences in Malta by advancing shared goals, encouraging a proactive international role, and assisting increased capacity and capability.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Strengthen Malta's ability to counter transnational threats by assisting in identification of transnational threats, promoting and enabling information sharing, and assisting increased capacity and capability of the country's resources.

**Mission Goal 2:** Promote U.S. innovation, advocate for U.S. commercial and technological solutions to Malta's largest challenges, and encourage Maltese investment in the U.S. market.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Strengthen bilateral commercial ties in order to supply Malta with U.S. technologies, expertise, and products.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Work to establish greater Maltese FDI into the U.S. market.

**Mission Goal 3:** Empower independent media and marginalized populations while promoting improved responsiveness of the Maltese government to support human rights.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Strengthen societal dialogue on shared values to promote tolerance, integration, and economic empowerment for disadvantaged populations.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Promote the role of a free and responsible media and audience media literacy in an effective democracy.



- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Promote women's rights as human rights by encouraging Malta to take steps towards a higher standard of human rights protection that include women's needs, economic empowerment, and the adequate and timely redress of abuse cases.

**Mission Goal 4:** Protect the interests of American citizens in Malta and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States.

- **Mission Objective 4.1:** Protect and support the welfare of U.S. citizens in Malta.
- **Mission Objective 4.2:** Protect U.S. borders by ensuring legitimate travel to the U.S.

**Management Objective 1:** Embassy Valletta will operate as a State Department model for management innovation and best practices.

**Management Objective 2:** Recruit and retain highly qualified staff to carry out Mission Objectives.

**Management Objective 3:** Improve the infrastructure of the historical Chief of Mission Residence (CMR) and develop a long-term maintenance program in collaboration with the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO).

**Management Objective 4:** Improve the health, wellness, and community morale to increase employee resiliency and overall well-being.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** | A Western-aligned Malta fully engaged in countering corruption, improving rule of law, addressing global challenges, and contributing to regional security.

**Description** | This goal reflects the President and Secretary of State's priorities for the transatlantic relationship. Malta is committed to peace, security, and stability in the region and enjoys shared values and a close and consultative bilateral relationship with the United States. However, enduring rule of law challenges, including lack of human capacity, antiquated laws, and low levels of political will to fight and prosecute corruption remain significant. Supporting Malta's efforts in the international arena, particularly related to their goals related to anti-corruption, climate change, small island nations, and sustainable development by the Embassy encourage increased cooperation with the United States on shared international goals and prevent Russia, the People's Republic of China, and other malign actors from using Malta as an inroad to Europe. Complementing these efforts, the Embassy will also continue to focus on assisting Malta in improving their Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing capabilities to counter financial crime and protect global financial markets. Building on the strong security cooperation relationship, the Embassy will continue to partner with Maltese law enforcement, military, and security services to enhance cooperation, particularly in the areas of countering smuggling, human and narcotics trafficking, and other illicit activity.

**Objective 1.1** | Strengthen Malta's rule of law through supporting the development and reform of laws and legal systems.

- **Justification** | The Mission supports the Interim National Security Strategy (INSS) by developing Malta as an aspiring partner and advocating American values. The Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor (RLA) and Interagency Law Enforcement Working Group (LEWG) member actions will be applied systematically to build Maltese institutional capacity while preventing overlap in resources and ensuring effective

results. Specific opportunities include training the next generation of leaders and civil servants, fostering more coordination within each agency, and striving for transparency of operations.

- **Linkages** | INSS, RBS2.2, RBS2.3, RBS2.4, JSP1.4, JSP1.4
- **Risks** | Lack of political will in Malta to engage in fighting corruption will continue to present risks for U.S. government efforts and programs. Public disenchantment over inadequate reforms and the inability of governments to root out corruption and provide equal access to justice could contribute to discontent, stagnation, and political instability.

**Objective 1.2** | Deter adversarial influences within Malta by advancing shared goals, encouraging a proactive role in multilateral fora, and assisting increased capacity and capability.

- **Justification** | Working with other diplomatic and international institutions, Mission Malta facilitates positive collaboration that reinforces U.S. influence and counters the authoritarian narrative driven by malign actors. In-line with the President's objectives for Europe, Mission Malta highlights and encourages Malta's promotion of shared global priorities including democracy building, climate action, and sustainable development, as well as competition with Great Powers seeking to advance their influence in the region. The absence of our engagement could allow other actors space to exert influence and exploit vulnerabilities.
- **Linkages** | INSS, RBS2.3, RBS2.4, JSP1.4, JSP1.4
- **Risks** | U.S. competitors –most notably Russia and the PRC –employ a range of tactics that exploit institutional weaknesses in democratic societies to expand their influence abroad, sow division within and between the United States and Europe, and shape political outcomes. Weak rule of law makes Malta more susceptible to this influence and democratic backsliding.

**Objective 1.3** | Strengthen Malta's ability to counter transnational threats by assisting in identification of transnational threats, promoting and enabling information sharing, and assisting in building capacity and capability of the country's resources.

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- **Justification** | Mission Malta's LEWG supports the Interim National Security Strategy's (INSS) goal to "promote a favorable distribution of power to deter and prevent adversaries from directly threatening the United States and our allies, inhibiting access to the global commons, or dominating key regions." The LEWG's activities will support Malta's criminal justice system, expand security force and military training, and work closely with Customs on illicit trafficking and non-proliferation issues. Additional training opportunities will enable Malta to expand upon their limited resources and further develop their capacity to counter regional threats, including development of world-class niche security capacity in selected areas related to maritime security in the Central Mediterranean. The LEWG members will specifically focus on mentoring to include fostering the Maltese national security strategy; developing strategic threat identification, leadership, and succession planning; and facilitating regional partnerships.
- **Linkages** | INSS, RBS4.1, RBS4.2
- **Risks** | Malta's strategic location at the Central Mediterranean seam between Europe and North Africa makes it the ideal location for transnational criminals, smugglers, and other illicit actors, including terrorists, to exploit Europe's southern maritime border. Without assistance, Malta's security elements may not be able to effectively counter these actors and the risk they pose to our and our allies' national security.

**Mission Goal 2** | Promote U.S. innovation, advocate for U.S. commercial and technological solutions to Malta's largest challenges, and encourage Maltese investment in the U.S. market.

**Description** | This goal reflects the Interim National Security Strategy's objective to "reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world" and to "shape emerging technology standards to boost our security, economic competitiveness, and values." The Mission will seek opportunities to highlight U.S. innovation and promote U.S. commercial

interests by identifying opportunities to expand U.S. export market access and promoting foreign direct investment in the United States.

**Objective 2.1** | Strengthen bilateral commercial ties in order to supply Malta with U.S. technologies, expertise, and products.

- **Justification** | Malta is well-placed to rebound from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and regain its status as one of the EU's fastest-growing economies, with record-low unemployment and moderate wage growth. Although no significant bilateral economic or trade disputes between the United States and Malta exist and U.S. goods and services generally are available in Malta, significant room to expand exists, particularly as U.S. businesses have not bid on large government tenders nor entered into concessions agreements. Malta's energy needs are underserved. The government seeks to both grow Malta's energy resource and production capacity and diversify its energy sector with an emphasis on renewables. This transition supported by public and EU funds offer a number of lucrative opportunities for innovative U.S. businesses. Exposure to new and emerging technologies provides a powerful tool to bridge cultural gaps, break down gender barriers, and inspire STEM awareness and careers among the growing population. By introducing an engaging learning environment, we provide Maltese society with access to technological resources that will enable American-style creative thinking and innovative ideas.
- **Linkages** | RBS 3.1, RBS3.2, RBS3.4, JSP 2.1, JSP 2.2
- **Risks** | Lack of viable U.S. business interest and economic investment in Malta can lead to coercive economic practices and restrictive models promoted by the PRC and Russia that undermine Malta's sovereignty. We will mitigate these risks through continued engagement and cooperative activities with the government and stakeholders on trade and investment issues of mutual concern.

**Objective 2.2** | Work to establish greater Maltese FDI into the U.S. market.

- **Justification** | Maltese businesses are interested in expanding into new markets, but often see the leap to the U.S. market as overwhelming. Demystifying the U.S. market will further the State-USAID objective of renewing America's competitive advantage for sustained economic growth and job creation.
- **Linkages** | RBS3.1, JSP2.1
- **Risks** | Without assistance in accessing the U.S. market, Maltese businesses will turn to other markets, closing off potential new investment corridors for U.S. business and forgoing the benefits of experience and exposure to regulated markets that results from transatlantic trade.

**Mission Goal 3** | Empower independent media and marginalized populations while promoting improved responsiveness of the Maltese government to support their human rights.

**Description** | Societies that empower a free press and marginalized populations to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful. In addition, people who are well informed and engaged in their society are essential to a functioning democracy. This goal reflects the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy's human rights objectives.

**Objective 3.1** | Strengthen societal dialogue on shared values to promote tolerance, integration, and economic empowerment for disadvantaged populations.

- **Justification** | U.S. diversity and intercultural respect provide the means for us to raise awareness on priority social issues. Malta lags in awareness of the need for acceptance of outsiders and tolerance of all people, including accessibility for those with disabilities. In addition, most Maltese exposure to the U.S. is generally through studio films which do not provide a well-rounded understanding of U.S. society. The obstacles and challenges marginalized populations encounter could be addressed if there were more frequent and in-depth dialogues across all sectors of society and government. Methods include the use of IVLPs, grants, ETAs, and other cultural integration programs. We

support the empowerment of vulnerable populations with recent efforts focused on migration and trafficking in persons (TIP).

- **Linkages** | INSS, DRLSF4.1, DRLSF4.2, DRLSF4.4, Executive Order 13985 to Advance Racial Equity and Support to Underserved Communities
- **Risks** | While we work with our Maltese security partners to improve their abilities to investigate and interdict transnational security threats, we remain concerned about the ability of Malta's notoriously slow judicial system to hear complicated cases efficiently and impartially, such as those involving human trafficking. The lack of a Maltese migrant integration policy poses challenges and prevents people, in particular African migrants, from fully integrating into Maltese society.

**Objective 3.2** | Promote the role of a free and responsible media and audience media literacy in an effective democracy.

- **Justification** | Following the October 2017 murder of a prominent journalist and blogger, the Mission launched a major program focused on emphasizing the important balance between press freedom and responsible media, with a long-term focus on improving local investigative journalism. Continued targeted outreach activities can reach a large percentage of Malta's small population using a full range of tools. We are increasing the quality and quantity of our interactions with the public and media through speaker programs to maximize our limited budget and tools. The Mission's increased use of social media acts as a force multiplier for a small Public Diplomacy section and provides an informal platform for communication of Mission priorities at very low cost. Both Twitter and Facebook remain popular and easy ways to reach a wide audience.
- **Linkages** | INSS, DRLSP2.1, DRLSF2.4, JSP
- **Risks** | Without assistance in this area, the media in Malta will continue to be overwhelmingly influenced by political forces and a lack of in-depth and objective coverage, analysis, and reporting will continue. Furthermore, audiences might struggle with determining what information disseminated by the media is accurate.

**Objective 3.3** | Promote women’s rights as human rights by encouraging Malta to take steps towards a higher standard of human rights protection that include women’s needs, economic empowerment, and the adequate and timely redress of abuse cases.

- **Justification** | We promote the empowerment of women and women’s rights on a moral basis, as well as to maximize economic potential. Despite its new liberal and progressive European identity and the existence of local legislation that protects women’s rights, Malta retains an insular character and likely will remain socially conservative by European standards. Maltese cultural attitudes and traditions towards women are lagging. With female labor participation and gender pay inequality among the worst in Europe, women are not typically in positions of power. Local NGOs that promote human rights for women lack resources to fulfill their mission. Even as the university system now graduates more women than men, we would like to focus on increasing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) outreach for girls and highlight U.S. higher education opportunities, as well as working to advance women entrepreneurs.
- **Linkages** | INSS, DRLSP4.2, DRLSF4.4, JSP, U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security
- **Risks** | If this objective is not achieved, women will continue to struggle for full participation in society and problems like domestic abuse and gender-based violence will not be addressed.

**Mission Goal 4** | Protect the interests of American citizens in Malta and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States

**Description** | This goal reflects the Interim National Security Strategy’s “solemn obligation to protect the security of the American people.”

**Objective 4.1** | Protect and support the welfare of American citizens in Malta.



- **Justification** | One of the highest priorities of the Department of State is to protect American interests and citizens around the world. Americans in Malta include residents, dual nationals, students, prisoners, businesspersons, scholars, and visitors. Mission Malta strives to serve all Americans by providing efficient, courteous, and timely services and support, while preparing to support Americans in emergencies. Malta, as with all European countries, remains potentially vulnerable to attacks from transnational terrorist organizations. Malta's open borders with members of the Schengen zone, and its extensive coastline, allow the possibility of individual terrorists entering/exiting the country undetected.
- **Linkages** | CASF1.1, CASF2.1, JSP5.1, JSP5.2
- **Risks** | Failure to focus on our mission's number one priority, the protection of U.S. citizens, will result in this important population not receiving critical safety and security information, vital documentation, and support during crisis/emergency situations.

**Objective 4.2** | Protect U.S. borders by ensuring legitimate travel to the United States.

- **Justification** | Mission Malta protects U.S. borders by ensuring that it complies with U.S. visa policy. The Mission supports legitimate travel by providing fair, transparent, efficient and courteous service to all visa applicants.
- **Linkages** | JSP5.2, CASF3.1
- **Risks** | Providing expedient yet security-based visa services to foreign nationals wishing to travel to the United States is essential to the economic future of our nation. When these services are delayed or not done with the appropriate focus on security based vetting, our economy and the security of the homeland is put at risk.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1** | Embassy Valletta will operate as a State Department model for management innovation and best practices.

- **Justification** | We have a modern facility staffed by 100 percent English speakers. The small embassy size coupled with a common language enables all employees to effectively and efficiently share information, tools, and resources across all sections. We are uniquely positioned to pilot any new tool or strategy to achieve Mission and State Department goals. In the wake of the COVID global pandemic, we can leverage the Mission's experiences to increase productivity, retention, and morale.
- **Linkages** | RBS5, OBOSF1.1, OBOSF1.2 OBOSF1.3, JSP4.1
- **Risks** | Failure to capitalize on the expertise, experience, and knowledge of our staff risks a backsliding in operating efficiencies, challenges with hiring quality employees and retaining high-performing employees in an increasingly competitive employment market, and the degradation of mission facilities.

**Management Objective 2** | Recruit and retain highly qualified staff to carry out Mission Objectives.

- **Justification** | Given the widespread labor shortages in the wake of the COVID global pandemic, Malta's job market is among the most competitive in the European Union. To attract and retain staff, it is imperative to increase wages to remain on par with peer competitors and to evaluate realignment and retention strategies to continue to support Embassy Valletta.
- **Linkages** | RBS5.1, RBS5.2, RBS5.3, JSP3.2, JSP4.1
- **Risks** | There must be a recognition of the risk of tokenism in diversity efforts and the mission must ensure that outreach opportunities are voluntary. Employees have limited bandwidth with their core duties; efforts to achieve this objective should not place an

outsized responsibility on members of diverse groups, especially those who have been negatively impacted.

**Management Objective 3** | Improve the infrastructure of the historical Chief of Mission Residence (CMR) and develop a long-term maintenance program in collaboration with the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO).

- **Justification** | The Chief of Mission Residence (Villa Apap Bologna) dates back to turn-of-the century Malta. During World War II, the villa became a place of refuge for the local population and was bombed twice by Axis powers. The property requires constant care and maintenance due to its aging infrastructure and limestone foundation and walls. Historically, Embassy Valletta has not had the funding or personnel on hand to provide the level of maintenance and care the facility requires. Embassy Valletta recently secured funding for some major repairs, but a viable long-term maintenance plan is needed to ensure the viability of the property.
- **Linkages** | OBOSF1.3, JSP4.3 **Risks** | Without improvements to its infrastructure and a long-term maintenance program, the historical Chief of Mission Residence risks falling into serious disrepair rendering it uninhabitable and requiring the acquisition of a new residence at significant cost to the U.S. government.

**Management Objective 4** | Improve the health, wellness, and community morale to increase employee resiliency and overall well-being.

- **Justification** | The COVID-19 global pandemic took a toll on employee's health (both physical and mental) and morale. By promoting these issues within the Mission, employees' resiliency and well-being can improve, creating a more cohesive and healthy workforce better ready to meet Mission goals and objectives.
- **Linkages** | MEDSF1.1, MEDSF1.2, JSP1.1
- **Risks** | COVID-19 created stresses on our employees both in their physical and mental health, as well as in their morale. Ignoring these impacts or failing to provide adequate support

and build resiliency in our staff could result in decreased productive, drops in retention, and increased demand for emergency medical and psychological care.